

Moving to skills-first hiring urgently required, but traditional resourcing practices preventing this

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As the UK's skills crisis continues, with four in five firms still struggling to recruit, traditional resourcing practices need to be adjusted to allow for a skills-first approach to hiring. That's according to a recent report by APSCo OutSource – the trade association for Recruitment Outsourcing.

In its latest report, *Solving the skills crisis: Challenging the norm and redefining outsourcing in the modern era*, the trade association revealed the extent of the skills crisis that continues to plague the UK, highlighting that outdated Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and ancient practices including a reliance on CVs and job specifications are all preventing businesses from creating more agile skills solutions.

As part of its OutSource Knowledge Hub – which brings together insight from experts across Adecco UK&I, Allegis Global Solutions, AMS, LinkedIn, Guidant Global, Het Flexhuis, Page Outsourcing, Magnit, Manpower Group and Resource Solutions – APSCo OutSource has outlined the best practice approaches to shifting to skills-first hiring, including:

- Start with the foundations: Employers need the processes and software to be able to precisely map the skills of all talent pools, including the potential of certain individuals, what adjacent skills can help fill resourcing gaps and the non-technical attributes that can benefit a business.

- Integration and collaboration are necessary: All stakeholders, leaders and division heads need to be on board with a move to a skills-based talent strategy, including hiring managers, suppliers, HR and L&D. It will take a collective effort to agree new approaches and train everyone to identify potential over experience.

- The onus shouldn't be placed on one part of the supply chain: The skills crisis is impacting every link in the resourcing supply chain, meaning that ownership of this issue should be shared. Collaboration and compromise – including reframing SLAs to be more appropriate in the current climate – should underpin partnerships, allowing suppliers to deliver their best results with fewer restrictions.

- Focus on future-proofing skills: It is impossible to predict future skills needs, however, creating a culture where upskilling, reskilling and identifying for potential are normal practices will be beneficial longer-term.

- Communication is key: Honest, transparent and collaborative discussions across the talent supply chain are necessary to create appropriate and flexible skills strategies. That includes ensuring that all internal functions and external suppliers have an equal voice in negotiations.

Melanie Forbes, Managing Director, APSCo OutSource, commented:

“The skills challenge facing today’s businesses aren’t going to be solved overnight. However, what is clear is that now is the time to rip up the rule book and rethink talent strategies. Challenges to the norm should be made at every part of the supply chain. No one solution will work for all, but every cog in the talent machine needs to be working together, and achieving this starts with having the right conversations, in the right room, with the right people.

“The recruitment landscape is becoming increasingly complex and as budgets tighten while skills shortages grow, we’re all facing difficult times ahead. Those in the recruitment outsourcing community are waking up to the fact that traditional resourcing isn’t fit for purpose, and a skills-first approach is needed where those with the potential to develop into a role are given more standing in the recruitment process. However, from the perspective of the outsourcing community at least, there appears to be a reluctance from end-clients to move away from the traditional approaches of hiring on experience and qualifications. When skills are simply unavailable, new thought processes are needed. Doing the same thing time and again won’t deliver new results. Without change, skills shortages will only continue to impact business stability and growth for the future.”

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About APSCo OutSource

APSCo OutSource is the trade association for Recruitment Process Outsourcing, Managed Service Providers, Statement of Work and Managed Project. We were developed from the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) as a separate trade body which truly understands the differences between staffing and recruitment outsourcing and which specialises in the outsourcing market.

For more information, visit: <https://www.apscooutsource.org/>